

Responses to Questions – RFP #0805WB
“California Mammal Species of Special Concern, 2010 Update and Revision”
February 26, 2009

The Department of Fish and Game (Department) has prepared the following information to assist respondents to the subject request for proposals (RFP). These questions have been raised during discussions with potential respondents since the RFP was advertised.

Question: Will the State’s current fiscal crisis affect whether the contract is awarded?

Response: The Department expects the contract will be awarded, provided a qualified proposal is received.

Question: Does the Department have a specific contractor in mind for this project?

Response: No.

Question: Where can I find the RFP? The link you sent me doesn’t take me to the California State Contracts Register!

Response: The Department of General Services changed the address for the State Contracts Register since we first announced the RFP. The address current at the release date of these responses is:

http://www.cscr.dgs.ca.gov/cscr/contract_ads/display/contract_cat_index.asp?Err=5&GUID

From the State Contracts Register, select Category 5 - Consulting, check the box for "Research/Reports/Environmental Reports/Surveys/Polygraph Examiners" and click the submit button. The resulting page includes the RFP.

Question: What is the relationship between the 1998 Mammal Species of Special Concern (MSSC) document and the current project? Is the 1998 document available?

Response: The 1998 update (sometimes referred to as Brylski et al. 1998) is a report prepared by contractors for the Department. Although the report was not designated as the official document supporting the MSSC list, the Department now includes most of the taxa determined in the 1998 report to be species of special concern on its current MSSC list. The 1998 report is a comprehensive review of the information available at the time for the covered taxa and relied on evaluation of some 90,000 records of California land mammals. ***Please note: contrary to discussions between the Department’s RFP contact person and some potential respondents, the database prepared for the 1998 report will not be available for use in the current MSSC project.*** The current draft of the 1998 document, edited by Betsy Bolster, is available to RFP respondents. Please contact Scott Osborn (916-324-3564, sosborn@dfg.ca.gov) to obtain a copy of the text and sample maps.

Question: Does the Department expect the contractor to solicit additional funds to complete the project? For example, the recently-completed California Bird Species of Special Concern (Shuford and Gardali 2008) relied partly on funding provided by a variety of NGOs, consulting firms, and individuals.

Response: The Department does not expect the contractor to solicit additional funding to complete the MSSC project. Respondents should consider the project complete as

described; there is no expectation that additional funding will be provided or sought for the described scope of work. If a proposal includes a plan to obtain additional funding, the funding plan and additional funding listed in the budget will not be evaluated.

Question: In the RFP Scope of Work (Item II A “Data Gathering”), respondents are required to “list all relevant primary literature on California’s native mammals to be reviewed as part of the MSSC” project. Does the Department really want the proposal to include a complete bibliography of California land mammal primary literature? What about secondary literature?

Response: The Department’s intent for the MSSC project is that all relevant literature (both primary and secondary, published and unpublished), as well as expert opinion, that addresses the status and conservation needs of potential MSSC taxa be reviewed and incorporated into the ranking scheme (and species accounts, as appropriate). Proposals need not include a list of all primary literature for all California mammalian taxa, though a complete bibliography for one or two sample taxa would be useful in evaluating the proposal. All relevant literature pertaining to topics that will be addressed in the MSSC document should be listed. Among other topics, these may include general, regional, or local references describing mammalian faunas, generic-, family-, and higher-level taxonomic studies, references describing potential threats to land mammals in California (such as loss of native vegetation, altered fire regimes, and climate change), and studies in conservation biology that could provide additional guidance or approaches for the California MSSC project. Respondents are encouraged to group the literature list by topic.

Question: The RFP Scope of Work (Item II A “Data Gathering”) states the contractor will be required to integrate the results of the California Bat Conservation Plan (CBCP), which is currently in preparation. If the scoring system used in the Bat Plan differs from the system devised for the remaining species considered in the MSSC, wouldn’t the evaluation of the bats versus all other mammals be inconsistent?

Response: The CBCP will not score the State’s bat species according to the metrics used in evaluating taxa for the MSSC project. Information developed for the CBCP will include tables of information developed by California bat experts related to conservation threats, habitat associations, and regional occurrence. The CBCP also will include detailed species accounts and management recommendations for the bat species. The final CBCP will be available in May 2010; however, draft species accounts should be available to the MSSC contractor at an earlier date. The MSSC contractors will be required to evaluate the State’s bat species along with other land mammals for possible inclusion on an updated MSSC list, but will be able to use information gathered for the CBCP in the evaluation and documentation of the MSSC list.

Question: How many members does the Department envision the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) having?

Response: Information and input for the project should be sought from all persons working on California land mammals; however, the Department expects the TAC should be relatively small, with perhaps six to 12 persons. While the RFP requires only that respondents describe how the TAC will be established, if a respondent has received

written commitments from persons willing to serve on the TAC, then these may be included.

Question: The RFP Scope of Work requires the contractor to address climate change effects on the geographic ranges of MSSC taxa using ecological niche modeling and the climate change scenarios of Cayan et al. (2008). Does the Department expect spatially-explicit modeling to be conducted for each MSSC taxon and climate change scenario?

Response: The Department will not require spatially-explicit modeling of possible future geographic ranges based on climate change scenarios as part of the contract. The scoring of potential MSSC taxa should include an evaluation of relative susceptibility to the effects of climate change, among other possible future threats. Each of the MSSC species accounts should include a conceptual discussion of the expected effects of climate change on the future distribution of the taxa. Such effects may include physiological constraints to altered temperature and water regimes, habitat loss due to coastal inundation, and habitat loss or shifting due to changes in vegetation patterns. This analysis will be especially important for taxa currently at risk due to habitat loss or fragmentation.

Question: Regarding distribution maps, the RFP Scope of Work states the contractor will gather locality information from museums and other sources and “the Department will assist with the compilation of locality data into file(s) suitable for GIS mapping and will generate the draft and final range maps for each taxon.” What exactly is the Department’s obligation for compiling locality information and producing the maps?

Response: The Department will provide the contractor with maps and/or electronic data from the Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB). The contractor will gather additional locality information for candidate MSSC taxa from museums and other information sources as described in the RFP. The contractor will provide a quality-controlled, georeferenced electronic locality dataset in a format specified by the Department (Excel spreadsheet or ESRI ArcGIS shapefile). The Department's responsibility is to compile the dataset(s), work with the contractor to resolve errors or other problems, produce and share draft maps for review by the contractor and TAC, and produce the final maps. For additional information on submission of locality information, please see the Department’s Biogeographic Data Branch website on this topic (http://bios.dfg.ca.gov/submitting_data.asp).